

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 4607

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: PRESS AND PUBLIC

REF: (A) STATE 192255; (B) STATE 192252; (C) STATE 195002

SUMMARY: AT ITS MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 27 THE SENIOR POLITICAL COMMITTEE CONCLUDED DISCUSSION OF MBFR PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICY AND AGREED THAT THE SPC CHAIRMAN SHOULD REPORT TO THE COUNCIL THAT:

(A) THERE IS AGREEMENT TO THE FORTHCOMING APPROACH TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS DURING MBFR NEGOTIATIONS PREFERRED BY THE U.S.;

(B) WITH REGARD TO MOE SHORT-TERM PRE-NEGOTIATIONS MEDIA REQUIRMENTS, THERE IS SUPPORT FOR STICKING TO THE GENERAL THEMES PROPOSED BY THE U.S.;

(C) THE AD HOC GROUP WILL NEED TO WORK ON THIS PROBLEM IN GREATER DETAIL WHEN AGREEMENT IS REACHED ON BASIC ALLIED POSITION.

1. AT SEPTEMBER 27 SPC MEETING, THERE WAS LENGTHY DISCUSSION ON BOTH OVERALL PHILOSOPHY OF ALLIED APPROACH TO PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND PRESS POLICY FOR SHORT-TERM PRE-NEGOTIATIONS PERIOD.

2. ON OVERALL APPROACH, U.S. REP DREW ON PARA 3, REF B. ALLIES CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBSTANTIALLY AGREED WITH THIS APPROACH. FRG AND ITALIAN REPS EMPHASIZED REQUIRMENT TO REMAIN FLEXIBLE IN A DYNAMIC SITUATION. ALLIES AGREED THAT THERE WAS GREAT NEED FOR ALL ALLIED PARTIES AT VIENNA, BRUSSELS AND HOME CAPITALS TO EXERCISE IN ALL CONTACTS

WITH THE PRESS DISCIPLINE AND CIRCUMSPECTION IN ADHERING TO GUIDELINES. MANY REPS EMPHASIZED NEED FOR CLOSE COORDINATION OF PRESS POLICY, AND SOUGHT REASSURANCE THAT U.S. UWAS FULLY COMMITTED TO COORDINATION DESPITE U.S. OBJECTION TO CENTRALLY DIRECTED INFORMATION PROGRAM. US REP RESPONDED THAT VERY FACT THAT U.S. HAD TABLED PAPER ON SUBJECT IN NATO INDICATED STRONG U.S. INTEREST IN WORKING CLOSELY WITH ALLIES ON PRESS POLICY.

3. ON PRESS POLICY FOR SHORT-TERM PRE-NEGOTIATION PERIOD, U.S. REP DREW ON REF A TO EXPAND ON GENERAL GUIDELINES. ALLIES WELCOMED THESE ELABORATIONS BUT CONSIDERED THAT GENERALIZATIONS WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT IN LIGHT OF RECENT PRESS LEAKS, AND AS NEGOTIATIONS DREW NEAR ALLIES WOULD HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH MORE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS. BELGIUM PRESSED FOR MORE DETAILED PRESS GUIDELINES, BUT DISCUSSION MADE CLEAR THAT SPC COULD NOT AT THIS TIME DRAFT DETAILED Q'S AND A'S FOR USE WITH THE PRESS. THE IS DISTRIBUTED AN UNOFFICIAL DRAFT CHECKLIST OF MBFR TOPICS AND QUESTIONS WHICH THE IS HAD PULLED TOGETHER FROM SUGGESTIONS BY SEVERAL DELEGATIONS. THIS DOCUMENT WAS OF DISCOURAGING LENGTH AND SPECIFICITY AND HELPED TO CONVINCE THE COMMITTEE THAT GENERAL TREATMENT OF OVERALL MBFR NEGOTIATING PROBLEM WAS BEST APPROACH FOR THE PRESENT. CANADIAN REP NOTED THAT TIME IS RUNNING SHORT, THE SPC IS HEAVILY BURDENED, AND THE AD HOC GROUP WOULD NEED TO ADDRESS THIS QUESTION IN GREATER DEPTH.

4. SEVERAL REPS OBJECTED TO IS CHECKLIST OF QUESTIONS FORMING PART OF THE SPC REPORT TO THE COUNCIL, PROPOSING INSTEAD THAT IT REMAIN UNOFFICIAL AND BE HANDED DIRECTLY TO THE AD HOC GROUP WHEN THEY MEET HERE. THERE WAS BROAD SUPPORT, HOWEVER, FOR GENERAL THEMES SUGGESTED BY THE U.S., AND SPC CHAIRMAN SUGGESTED THAT U.S. REP'S SPEAKING NOTES (BASED ON REFS A AND C), BE ATTACHED AS A NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO HIS CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO NAC.

5. U.S. REP INFORMED COMMITTEE (PER PARA 2 REF A) THAT U.S. MBFR DELEGATION IS PREPARED TO HAVE ITS PUBLIC AFFAIRS ADVISER ACT AS REGULAR SPOKESMAN FOR THE ALLIANCE DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS.
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